1. Describe the stasis in the play: where, when, who, what, etc. in a paragraph.

The stasis is the narration of Brenda Aoki’s early childhood, which she narrates herself. It is the growth and progression from Adolescence to adulthood, in the Ghetto, which happens to be called the Westside. A large part of her stasis has to do with her dealing with her emotions for Kali, her on and off again boyfriend, and her outgrowing her friends.

2. What is the intrusion?

The intrusion in the play is when Brenda and Kali start High School and they start to separate ways and mindset. Brenda is in the advance class while Kali is in the class for losers, this difference also impacts the people they chose to hang out with, developing different mentalities. This is the intrusion because it is the start of the spiraling down of their relationship, the difference in their education displays the different routes that they will go on.

3. What is the unique factor?

The unique factor is that this is the day that the narrator started her narration of her story, so to her this is where it all started. She is narrating her memoir.

4. What is the dramatic question that should be answered by the end of the play?

The dramatic question is whether Brenda will be able to leave the Westside behind and become something more, or will she just end up like a “mama.”

5. Provide an illustration of the two kinds of exposition that the play has in it.

The first kind of an exposition is her first-person narration, the fact that she knows what has happened in the past, present and future of her younger self. The second exposition is the way she narrates her story and what she centers it around, what she believes as important which is her relationship with Kali.

6. Identify the most theatrical moment in the play and of what importance it seems to be.

The most theatrical moment of the play was when Kali left the Parlor and was talking to Smoke, the tension and fast pace in that scene was extremely theatrical, especially when they started shooting. The fight scene was so dramatic, especially when the Queen (Kali’s aunt) got shot.

7. List some of the themes of the play.

Some of the themes in the play would be: love, growth, independence and pride. Many of the problematic scenes in Brenda’s life centered around these scenes.

8. What do the narrator want and what are some obstacles that stand in the way of her getting what she wants?

Brenda wants what every teenage girl wants, the fairytale ending. She wants to leave the ghetto with her teenage sweetheart, and become something important. However, the way society is set up and the obstacles in her life prevents that. Even though there is the Ethnic Opportunity Program, she happens to be one of the few minorities at her school, therefore she feels extremely lone and isolated, later dropping out. Another obstacles is that she is not financial well off therefore it is hard for her to leave without a real financial backing to discover what she would like to do with her life.

9. Describe some possible images in the play and how does the title help us understand the play.

The beach that Brenda and Kali used to body surf on is the representation of the simplicity that their relationship once was however, it is becoming suffocating and rough like the waves that had consumed Brenda. Another image of the roses at the end is a demonstration of the beauty and irony of death. The death of Kali’s aunt was so abrupt and unintentional; however, she was another causality of meaningless of gang violence. The garden is also ironic because it where Brenda got her first kiss, and the place that helped flourish her relationship with Kali, yet in the end it is where he dies, where their relationship started is where it also ended.

10. Briefly define the family relationships that are examined in the play.

The first relationship, is Brenda’s relationship with her family which represents her tie with the Westside. When she tried to cut the Westside out of her life and deny it’s presence also led to her cutting out her family, however, when she finally accepted it as a part of her, her relationship with her family reignited. Another family relationship would be Kali’s aunt, Kali and Smoke, they were their own little family, however many things got in the way of their friendship, and they ended killing each other.